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management Improvement

BULLETIN

No. 8

Washington 25, D. C.

February 27, 1950

YOUR 1950 AWARDS COMMITTEE



(From Left to Right) J. C. Brown, Jr., Grain; H. Wood, Jr., Price Support and Foreign Supply; M. W. Baker, Fruit and Vegetable; R. D. Smith, Office of Personnel Services - Executive Secretary; G. E. Tichenor, Deputy Assistant Administrator for Management - Chairman; R. H. Fuchs, Fiscal; B. S. Soleau, Transportation and Warehousing; S. E. Wrather, Tobacco; (not shown - D. S. Anderson, Dairy)

12560 BRAINS

By G. E. Tichenor, Chairman
PMA Central Employee Awards Committee

There are 12,560 employees in PMA--and that means 12,560 brains.

I am sure that if any one of those employees were accused of not being able to come up with a single constructive suggestion for bringing about some improvement in the programs or operations he knows at first hand, he would be quite indignant. And with reason, for each employee undoubtedly has an idea or two on these matters that is worth considering.

Yet--looking at this from another angle--think what it would mean to PMA in terms of a comprehensive management improvement program if all of those single ideas from each of those 12,560 brains could be pried loose, got out into the open for discussion and study!

That is the purpose of the Central Em-

ployee Awards Committee--to pry these ideas loose, get them out where we can look at them, and eventually use them in making PMA the most efficient organization in the entire Federal Government.

In attempting this we are asking each of PMA's employees to do his share in carrying out orders from the President and the Congress to give regular and increased attention to economy in our operations and to greater effectiveness in our programs. Administrator Ralph S. Trigg considers these orders--and employee cooperation in carrying them out--so important that he has asked each Branch and Office in PMA to be responsible for developing a management improvement program in its own shop. And each Branch or Office is going to succeed in this only to the extent that it is able to tap these ideas of yours.

That's why "YOUR AGENCY WANTS YOUR IDEAS!"

2nd HIGHEST PMA AWARD

John Kirk of the Fiscal Branch in Washington has been awarded \$330 for an employee suggestion--the second highest cash award so far to a PMA employee.

It all began last year when the GAO began re-auditing paid transportation vouchers for CCC commodities shipments made from July 1943 through September 1946. To determine proper freight rates on many shipments involving meats and meat products, the GAO needs detailed information on the classification or type of commodity shipped. To get the needed information GAO sends "Information Requests" to PMA for the answers. It takes a lot of time to answer each request because of the research involved.

By May 1949 nearly 1,000 of these requests had piled up in PMA, and the unit was head over heels in work. But that wasn't all--they found out that they could expect about 2,000 requests a month for the next three years. It looked like the only thing to do was to get more people on the work. Kirk, who was right in the middle of it all began to wonder if there wasn't some simpler way to answer the requests. He thought of several ideas, but rejected each one as being impractical. He kept on thinking and looking around when he came across the "Freight Billing Guide" being used in another office for preparing bills of lading. Checking through this publication and another one he found, he discovered that all the information about each commodity being requested by GAO was contained in these two books. He rushed back to his boss with the books and suggested that if GAO would use them, they need not send the requests to PMA.

It was a wonderful idea, if GAO would only agree. A meeting was arranged with GAO. A couple of days before the meeting, Kirk went to the hospital and couldn't attend the meeting. But the idea has been planted, and his supervisors were able to convince the GAO at that meeting. "Bundle up those 1,000 requests you have on hand" said the GAO representative, "and forget about them, and we won't need to send you the other 71,000 either."

"Boy, oh boy!" remarked Kirk when told of his award, "we were certainly sweating"--and reflecting further he added--"But you know, I believe it was really opportunity knocking----for me!"

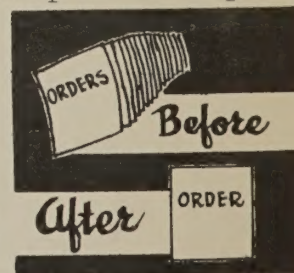
RECENT AWARDS

CASH AWARDS - The following suggesters save the Government nearly \$25,000 a year with their ideas. If any of the plans can be adapted to your work, please notify the PMA Central Employee Awards Committee, Washington, D. C. Let's give the suggester full credit and consideration for his idea! Write the Central Committee for additional information on any suggestion.



FRANK CUNNINGHAM, TRANSPORTATION AND WAREHOUSING BRANCH, WASHINGTON - \$10. Developed a method to save time and materials in the preparation and correction of mimeograph stencils. The proposal involves the restoration of thickened mimeograph correction fluid to its proper consistency. Most of the suggester's time is devoted to the preparation of mimeograph stencils involving tables of figures. Attempts to use the partially dried fluid (which cannot readily be detected) to correct errors on stencils results in damage to the stencils causing loss of materials and manhours required to rewrite the stencil or patch damaged portions. By adding alcohol or ditto fluid to the correction fluid, the use of additional stencils and man-hours for correction is eliminated. Neater work also results. This method is advantageous only in situations where stencils are continuously prepared.

STEPHEN G. BENIT, JR., PMA COMMODITY OFFICE, DALLAS - \$85. Proposed an improved method for handling delivery orders in the shipment of canned grapefruit juice. The former practice in the Dallas Office required the preparation of numerous individual documents



for each delivery order. By grouping the orders according to destination and consignee, only one each of the required documents had to be prepared for each group of delivery orders consigned to the same destination. The method permitted substantial savings in time, supplies and material. Also more rapid release of the documents and earlier issuance of shipping instructions to contractors was possible.

JANE DEBOSKEY, FOOD DISTRIBUTION PROGRAMS BRANCH, WASHINGTON - \$10. Suggested the elimination of duplicate copies of Form FP-10 and accompanying check sheets without impairment to the service. The plan discontinues the need for about 3,000 duplicate copies of Form FP-10 and 3,000



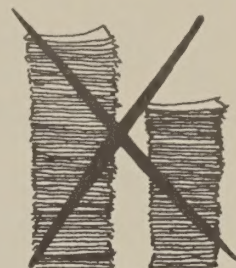
check sheets a year. Elimination of the duplicate copies of these reports, which are air mailed to Washington reduces the postage weight by one half. Results--savings in postage costs, and also savings in time and paper.

LOUISE G. BURKE, FISCAL BRANCH, WASHINGTON - \$10. Devised an improved method for processing claims (payable from CCC Administrative Expense Fund) arising out of the death of an employee. The plan reduced the amount of handling required by claims examiner and eliminated the need for special messenger service in delivering the Designation of Beneficiary Form to the Civil Service Commission. The tangible value of the proposal is small compared with the satisfaction to the beneficiaries by early settlement, especially true in distress cases.

LOUISE G. BURKE, FISCAL BRANCH, WASHINGTON - \$30. Proposed a formula for determining an employee's fiscal liability for having used a Government-owned car for personal travel. The former method was more complex and did not provide for operational costs. The new formula is simple, it saves about 60 man-hours work a year and it permits a more equitable reimbursement to the Government for the actual operational and overhead cost of the automobile involved in personal travel.

BERTHA M. WEICHOLD, FISCAL BRANCH, WASHINGTON - \$10. Suggested a change in the method of preparing Form PMA-37 "Notice of Suspension". These notices are used to advise the payee that a certain amount has been suspended from his claim on Standard Form 1067 "Public Voucher for Transportation of Passengers" or Standard Form 1113 "Public Voucher for Transportation Charges". The previous method required an original and 4 copies of the suspension form. The new plan eliminates the need for 2 of the copies. In addition to saving time and material, less file cabinet space for storage is required.

JOHN W. KIRK, FISCAL BRANCH, WASHINGTON \$330. Proposed a plan acceptable to the General Accounting Office, to use certain publications for obtaining information needed in the re-audit of paid CCC transportation vouchers covering shipments from 1943 to 1946. The publications sug-



gested for use were the "Freight Billing Guide" and the "Meat Products Purchase Specifications" Manual. This eliminated the need of the GAO from requesting PMA to furnish detailed information on more than 72,000 cases over a period of 3 years. The time consuming process of obtaining the information sought by GAO involves examination of individual contracts, public vouchers, bills of lading and other related papers, and requires individual reply in each case. The plan eliminated the need for an additional 6½ man years of work in PMA involving a savings of more than \$21,000 a year. Considerable savings in supplies and materials also result in not having to answer 72,000 letters.

MERITORIOUS PAY INCREASES - These employees have been honored with Superior Accomplishment Pay Increases for their outstanding achievements.

ERMA R. ROGERS, HEAD EMPLOYEE ACCOUNTS UNIT, FISCAL BRANCH, WASHINGTON - For outstanding leadership and exceptional performance of her duties beyond that required for an excellent efficiency rating under conditions that demanded a great deal of ingenuity and administrative ability.

MARGARET M. SINKULA, FISCAL ACCOUNTANT, FISCAL BRANCH, WASHINGTON - For meritorious service to PMA and Department in reconstructing vital accounts and accounting records on certain appropriations which were practically useless for reporting to General Accounting Office. This service has enabled the entire Department to avoid being the target for criticism.

WALTER A. STROUD, ASSISTANT CHIEF, CLAIMS DIVISION, FISCAL BRANCH, WASHINGTON - For exceptional service to the Department in advising and counseling with reference to the fiscal aspects of transportation of agricultural commodities, involving unusual initiative, research and study far beyond that required or normally expected.

WILLIAM L. EVANS, MARKETING SPECIALIST, FRUIT AND VEGETABLE BRANCH, WASHINGTON - For distinguished authorship in devising and compiling a Digest of Departmental rulings in over 3,500 controversies under the Perishable Agricultural Commodities Act, indispensable in insuring consistent interpretations of the Act and of the regulations.

MICHAEL T. COOGAN, MARKETING SPECIALIST, FRUIT AND VEGETABLE BRANCH, LOS ANGELES - For outstanding service in the effective and efficient administration of marketing agreements, including surplus removal and export subsidy programs, in the face of overwhelming obstacles; and for unusual analytical ability in appraising the economic and organizational problems involved in the handling of exceedingly complex and difficult marketing operations.

SE AREA PROVES EMPLOYEES HAVE IDEAS

In order to find out if employees have ideas for improvement, the SE Area Personnel Division put on an intensive promotion campaign during December.

Miscellaneous publicity material was distributed, employees were talked to individually and in groups and a film on "Multiple Management" was shown to office heads.

Although December is not an ideal month because of its holidays for conducting such a campaign, the results were surprising. 52 suggestions were turned in. This number for one month is greater than were received during the rest of the life of the program in the SE Area.

We've got the ideas--let's turn them in as suggestions.

SUPERVISOR'S HONOR ROLL

The submission of a suggestion that earns an award from any group signifies that the supervisor of that group is displaying the kind of leadership that promotes constructive thinking.

The following are supervisors whose employees' recent awards are covered in this issue.



- J. B. Charlton, T&W, Washington (for Frank Cunningham)
- P. M. Miller, PMA Commodity Office, Dallas (for Stephen Benit, Jr.)
- S. C. Vanneman, FDP, Washington (for Jane DeBoskey)
- L. T. Nordlie, Fiscal Branch, Washington (for Louise G. Burke, - 2 awards)
- G. A. Ortlip, Fiscal Branch, Washington (for Bertha Weichold)
- H. F. Altman, Fiscal Branch, Washington (for John W. Kirk)



Hot Stove League

We haven't received the response we anticipated for contributions to this column. Are all you people perfectly content and satisfied? There must be a few who have gripes, criticism, or comment, good or bad. Let's have them.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

ARE TASKS SPREAD TOO THINLY?

The repetition of the same task by several employees may be assign that too many employees are doing the same task. The work of one person working steadily at a task is usually more productive than the same number of man hours of work by several individuals.



Needless interruption
Inconsistency
Tasks spread too thinly
Buck-passing
Change-over time loss